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## STAFF NOTES:

# Middle East Africa South Asia

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**MIDDLE EAST – AFRICA – SOUTH ASIA**

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Nigeria

*Aid Sought from Ghana to Ease Port Congestion*

114 Nigeria, in an effort to ease its serious port congestion, has recently arranged for some vessels to discharge Nigerian cargoes at Ghanaian ports for overland transshipment to Nigeria. The agreement with Ghana is intended to permit faster turnaround of ships and speedier movement of imports, although it will cost shippers 15 percent more for lightering, border charges, and transshipment through Togo and Dahomey.

115 Last month, delays at Nigeria's ports, already longer than at any other OPEC nation, reached a new record of over 185 days; more than 300 ships were waiting for berths at Apapa, adjoining Lagos. In contrast, ships had to wait less than 30 days for berths last December.

116 To speed up deliveries of materials needed for development projects the government has temporarily removed import duties on cement, is running customs procedures and lightering services 24 hours a day, and has imposed penalties on importers who do not move cargo quickly. In addition, Nigeria now is requiring advance notice by steamship companies of expected arrival and departure dates, cargo tonnages and composition, and ship characteristics necessary to enable port authorities to schedule ship sailings more efficiently.

117 By late August some improvement had been made for imports, apparently at the expense of exports. Delays at Apapa for ships carrying imports were reduced to 125-135 days, but no berth guarantees were being offered to ships arriving to pick up exports.

118 The arrangement with Ghana probably will ease Nigeria's port situation somewhat, but conditions are not likely to improve substantially for several years until major expansion of port facilities is completed.  
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India

*After Two Months Under the Emergency*

The US embassy in New Delhi reports that as India enters its third month under a state of emergency, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's political position remains strong. She is encountering little resistance either to her increasingly authoritarian rule or to her insistence that India's British-style parliamentary form of government needs to be revamped.

Gandhi's hand has been strengthened since June by encouraging short-term economic prospects, particularly in agriculture, and by widespread popular satisfaction with the increased discipline and order resulting from the emergency regulations.

India appears to be heading toward its best economic year since 1970-71, and Gandhi will get the credit for this temporary respite. Ample summer rainfall promises an unusually good harvest this fall. The government, meanwhile, has been successful in cooling inflationary pressures, resulting in considerably lower prices than a year ago.

Across India there is applause for many changes that are attributed to the emergency. For example, the traditionally lethargic bureaucracy, frightened by some 5,000 recent firings for corruption, ineptitude, and dereliction of duty, is now working with unaccustomed diligence. Additionally, university students, long known for political activism, appear to be concentrating on their studies. Shopkeepers are complying with the new requirement to post prices and peace prevails on the labor front.

Intimidation continues as Gandhi's main weapon against her opponents. Altogether, about

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23,000 persons have been arrested since the emergency was declared on June 26. Approximately two-thirds of the detainees reportedly were seized for crimes such as hoarding and smuggling; the remainder were arrested on political charges. The threat of arrest has led hundreds of opposition politicians to resign from their parties and publicly pledge support to Gandhi's 20-point socio-economic program that promises something for everyone but is so far little more than rhetoric.

1/2 The Congress Party remains solidly behind Gandhi, and Congress Party politicians stoutly defend the emergency. The party's parliamentary majority readily endorsed recent constitutional amendments that expand Gandhi's power, and it can be expected to approve anticipated legislation to curtail the judiciary.

In the two states under non-Congress governments, Tamil Nadu and Gujarat, the emergency is accepted as a fact of life, and press censorship rules are now obeyed more closely than in the early days of the emergency. If these states continue to operate within the bounds set by Gandhi, she probably will permit their governments to remain in power, partly because they also serve as evidence of her willingness to tolerate some political opposition.

Gandhi seems to be leaning more toward conservative political advisers and trying to play down her long-standing ties with the pro-Soviet left. She has also indicated an interest in closer relations with the US; last Sunday she unexpectedly accepted a dinner invitation at the US embassy.

The embassy does not anticipate fundamental shifts in Gandhi's economic policies because of her unwillingness to bring about disruptive changes that could be politically damaging. Thus many of her economic decisions will likely be aimed at short-term goals, avoiding changes that seem required if a start is to be made toward remedying the enormous economic problems India faces.  
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